



Midpeninsula Regional
Open Space District

R-23-39
Meeting 23-11
April 12, 2023

AGENDA ITEM 3

AGENDA ITEM

Award of Contract to Square Signs of Burbank, California to complete the Administrative Office Interpretive Exhibit Wall Fabrication at 5050 El Camino Real, Los Altos CA

GENERAL MANAGER'S RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Authorize the General Manager to enter into a contract with Square Signs for a not-to-exceed base contract amount of \$94,353.
2. Authorize a contingency of 15% in the amount of \$14,153 to be reserved for unanticipated issues, bringing the total not-to-exceed contract amount of \$108,506.

SUMMARY

The Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District (District) issued a Request for Bids (RFB) for the Administrative Office (AO) Interpretive Elements Exhibit Wall Fabrication (Project) on February 21, 2023 and received four (4) bid proposals on March 14, 2023. Square Signs of Burbank, California, was identified as the lowest responsive and responsible bidder. The General Manager recommends awarding a contract to Square Signs for a not-to-exceed base contract amount of \$94,353. The General Manager also recommends authorizing a 15% contingency amount of \$14,153 to cover unanticipated issues that may arise, bringing the total not-to-exceed contract amount to \$108,506. The adopted Fiscal Year 2022-23 (FY23) budget includes sufficient funds to cover the work through the end of the fiscal year. Funding in FY24 to complete the work will be requested as part of the annual Budget and Action Plan process. The project is scheduled to be completed in December 2023.

BACKGROUND

At the July 2017 public meeting, the Board of Directors (Board) adopted a resolution to enter into a purchase and sale agreement for the building located at 5050 El Camino Real in Los Altos (R-17-90). Escrow closed on February 1, 2019. The District moved into the new building in May 2022 and the final permit sign-off by the City of Los Altos is expected in Summer 2023. This new office space presents multiple opportunities to enhance public awareness of the District and foster a deeper connection to the local natural resources and iconic Bay Area landscapes through informative and inspirational interpretive elements.

At the November 18, 2020 Board meeting, the Board authorized the General Manager to enter into a contract with EDX Exhibits (EDX) for interpretive planning and design of public interpretive elements in the new AO building (R-20-133). Staff and EDX worked with the Board on several design iterations. At the August 25, 2021 regular meeting, the Board approved the

design for two interpretive elements: (1) interior topographic relief model and (2) interior interpretive wall exhibit (R-21-111). The District subsequently entered into contract with InkDwell Design (InkDwell) in 2022 (a local design firm owned by artist Jane Kim) to prepare the detailed graphic illustration for the interpretive wall exhibit based on the Board-approved EDX concept design (see Attachment 2 for a rendering of the detailed graphic). The contract presented for approval as part of this Agenda Item covers the fabrication of the interior interpretive wall exhibit only, utilizing the detailed illustration prepared by InkDwell. The installation of the exhibit wall and the topographic relief model will be procured separately.

DISCUSSION

Interpretive Exhibit Wall

The recommended contract for the Administrative Office Interpretive Exhibit Wall Fabrication will produce a 32.5-foot by 9-foot wall exhibit that will be installed in the public atrium area. The fabrication will follow the detailed illustrative design prepared by InkDwell (refer to Attachment 2 – which is based on the original design concept from EDX) that aligns with the Board-approved scheme of “*Bringing the Preserves to the People*”. The interpretive exhibit will highlight with precise details the iconic landscapes, habitats, plants and animals found in District preserves using natural and reused materials, smooth transitions, and natural colors to draw people into the preserve experience. Fabrication also includes touchable replica objects found in District preserves and other discovery moments to foster connection and curiosity. Overlaid on the mural will be panels containing text and images that align with the approved themes. Materials and design elements selected for the exhibit wall include:

- Reclaimed redwood
- ApplePly panels
- Hot cast bronze objects
- Painted resin
- Gopher ImageLOC (fused aluminum)
- Translucent acrylic panels
- Direct print on redwood veneer

Contractor Selection

The District issued a Request for Bids (RFB) on February 21, 2023. The scope of the work under the recommended contract only includes fabrication of the interpretive exhibit wall. Installation services were separated from the work scope in an effort to attract a broad range of fabricators, including those who may not meet licensing requirements that pertain to installation. The RFB was posted via BidSync and released to three builder’s exchanges. Legal notices were posted in the San Jose Mercury News and the San Mateo County Times, and a link to the solicitation was posted on the District website. Staff also directly contacted seven local qualified firms about the RFB. One non-mandatory pre-bid conference was held on March 1, 2023 with two (2) fabricators in attendance.

The District publicly opened the bids on March 14, 2023. The District received four (4) bid proposals on March 14, 2023. Square Signs of Burbank, California was identified as the lowest responsive and responsible bidder. The detailed breakdown of the bids are as follows:

Bidder	Location	Total Base Bid	Capital Project Manager's Estimate (\$200,000)
1. Square Signs	Burbank, CA	\$94,352.51	47.2%
2. Bang! Creative	Springville, UT	\$129,105.00	64.6%
3. Southern Custom Exhibits	Anniston, AL	\$149,077.00	74.5%
4. RS Display Inc.	Gilroy, CA	\$203,922.27	102.0%

The General Manager recommends awarding a contract to Square Signs for a not-to-exceed base contract amount of \$94,353. Square Signs' recent comparable projects include:

- Edwards Lifesciences Exhibit Wall – Fabrication and installation of custom engraved wood panel wall with illuminated letters.
- Mirman School Mural Project – Fabrication and installation of outdoor mural.
- Discovery Cube Children's Museum – Fabrication and installation of multiple exhibits throughout museum.

Attachment 3 is a sample portfolio of their previous work fabricating custom wooden graphics, signs, and wall treatments. Staff will perform bi-weekly or monthly video conference meetings to track fabrication progress. Contractor will provide material submittals to the District for approval prior to fabrication and regular email updates with photos to document progress. Invoices will be paid based on percentage of work completed.

FISCAL IMPACT

The overall project remains within the May 2019 Board-approved project budget for planning, design, and construction of \$27.4 million ([R-19-64](#)). Funding sources for the Project have included *Committed for Infrastructure* reserve funds, rent income, parity bond proceeds, and interest earned from the parity bonds. Funding also includes partial reimbursement from the sale of the former 330 Distel Circle administrative office (R-20-117).

The FY23 adopted budget for the New Administrative Office (AO) Facility project #31202 is \$146,000. A FY22 carryover of approximately \$1,374,450 will be proposed as part of the Quarter 3 review, which would bring the FY23 budget to \$1,520,450 (the carryover is due to invoices that were processed after the June 30 fiscal year end date). There are sufficient funds in the projected project budget to cover the recommended expenditures.

New Administrative Office (AO) Facility #31202	Prior Year Actuals	FY23 Adopted	FY24 Projected	FY25 Projected	TOTAL
Acquisition:	\$31,742,406	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$31,742,406
Planning/Design/Construction:	\$24,562,816	\$116,000	\$0	\$0	\$24,678,816
Move-in and Closeout:	\$460,372	\$30,000	\$0	\$0	\$490,372
Total Budget:	\$56,765,594	\$146,000	\$0	\$0	\$56,911,594
*Proposed FY22 Carryover in Q3:	\$0	\$1,374,450	\$0	\$0	\$1,374,450
Total Projected Budget:	\$56,765,594	\$1,520,450	\$0	\$0	\$58,286,044

Acquisition and associated purchase costs Spent-to-Date (as of 03/21/23):	(\$31,742,406)	\$0	\$0	\$0	(\$31,742,406)
Spent-to-Date (as of 03/21/23):	(\$25,023,188)	(\$903,650)	\$0	\$0	(\$25,926,838)
Encumbrances:	\$0	(\$311,100)	\$0	\$0	(\$311,100)
Square Signs, Inc. Contract:	\$0	(\$18,871)	(\$75,482)	\$0	(\$94,353)
15% Contingency:	\$0	\$0	(\$14,153)	\$0	(\$14,153)
Budget Remaining (Proposed):	\$0	\$286,829	(\$89,635)	\$0	\$197,194

*An approximate \$1,374,450 adjustment will be brought to the Board in Quarter 3

Fabrication of interpretive elements for the AO are not eligible for Measure AA reimbursement.

PRIOR BOARD AND COMMITTEE REVIEW

The Administrative Office Interpretive Elements Fabrication Project has previously come to the Board at the following public meetings:

- **November 18, 2020:** The Board awarded a contract to EDX Exhibits to complete phase 1 planning and design of all the public-facing interpretive elements for the new AO. ([R-20-133, meeting minutes](#))
- **January 27, 2021:** The Board reviewed, discussed and approved the project brief, which documents the interpretive foundations that will inform and guide the project. ([R-21-18, meeting minutes](#))
- **March 10, 2021:** The Board reviewed, discussed and approved the Scheme 1 design approach, which provides an overall design approach and general tone, mood and color palette for the project. ([R-21-37, meeting minutes](#))
- **June 2, 2021:** The Board confirmed their preference for use of the aluminum material chosen by the project architect for the four banners on the outside of the building, rather than a cut steel option shown at the March 10, 2021 board meeting. ([R-21-70, meeting minutes](#))
- **August 25, 2021:** The Board reviewed, discussed and approved designs for the final remaining interpretive elements: topographic relief model and interpretive wall exhibit. ([R-21-111, meeting minutes](#))
- **October 13, 2021:** The Board approved a contract amendment with EDX to provide support during fabrication and installation of the remaining interpretive elements. ([R-21-135](#))

PUBLIC NOTICE

Public notice was provided as required by the Brown Act.

CEQA COMPLIANCE

This item is not a project subject to the California Environmental Quality Act. Future environmental review will be conducted on the proposed site improvements as part of the permitting process.

NEXT STEPS

If approved, the General Manager will enter into a contract with Square Signs. Final contract signature is subject to meeting all District requirements, such as having all required insurance and bonding in place. Fabrication of the exhibit wall is expected to occur from June through August 2023, with installation between August and October 2023. Concurrently, the 3D topo relief model is estimated to commence in May 2023 through a separate contract and be installed around July 2023.

Attachments:

1. Excerpt from Interior Element Production Drawings
2. InkDwell Draft Design
3. Square Signs Portfolio

Responsible Department Head:

Jason Lin, Engineering and Construction Manager

Prepared by:

Paul Kvam, Senior Capital Projects Manager, Engineering and Construction

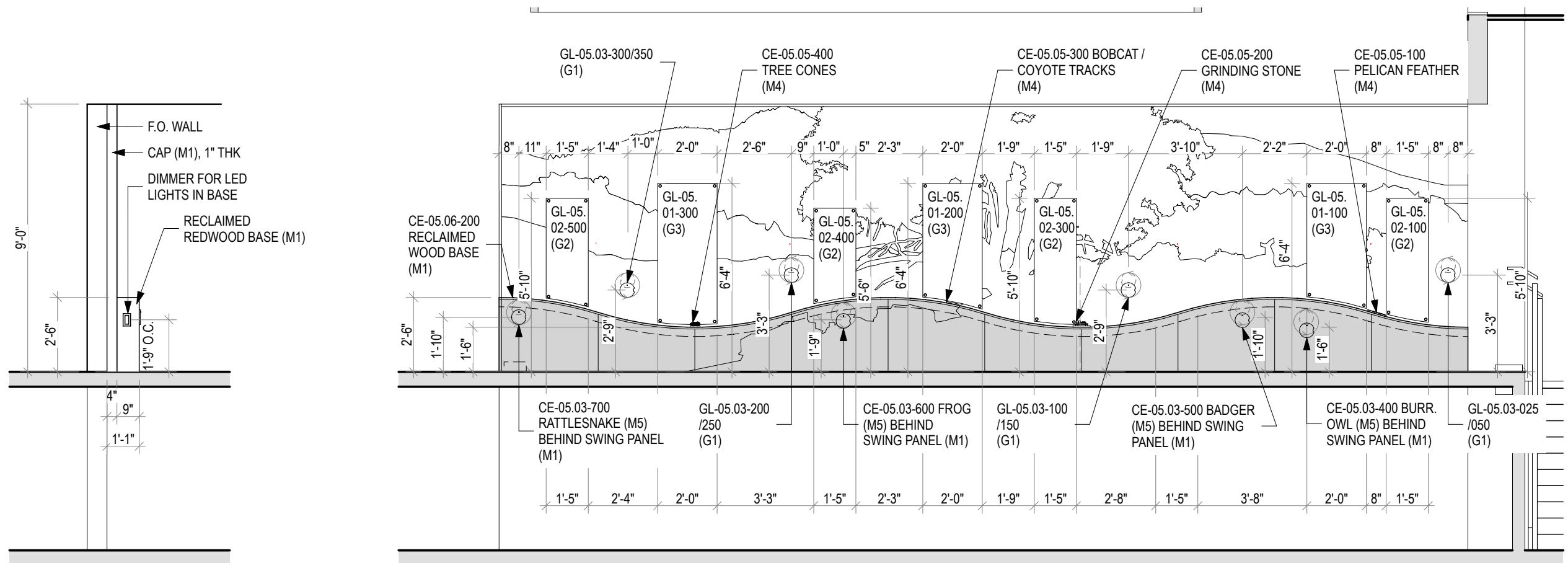
These documents have been created to show the designers' intent only. Written dimensions shall take precedence over scaled dimensions. Contractors shall verify and be responsible for all dimensions and conditions on the job, and this office must be notified of any variations from the dimensions and conditions shown by these drawings. Shop details must be submitted to this office before beginning fabrication. All ideas, designs, and arrangements indicated on these drawings are the property of EDX and are intended for the sole use of the client noted.



Final mural digital imagery will be created and supplied by Owner for production and fabrication.

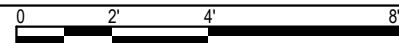
1 EXHIBIT WALL 3D VIEW

NOT TO SCALE



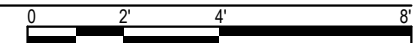
2 SIDE OF EXHIBIT WALL - ELEVATION

SCALE: 1/4" = 1'-0"



3 EXHIBIT WALL - ELEVATION

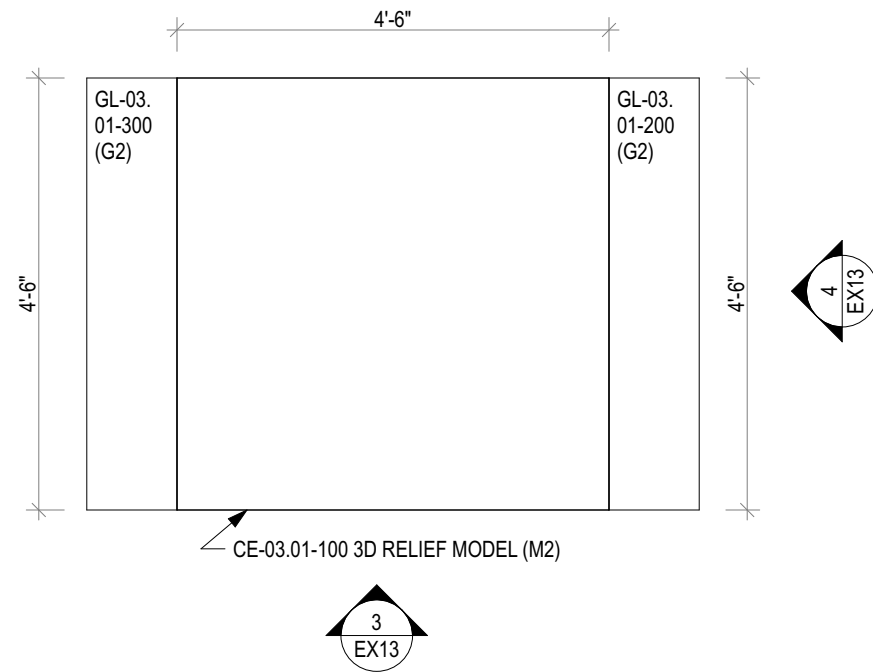
SCALE: 1/4" = 1'-0"



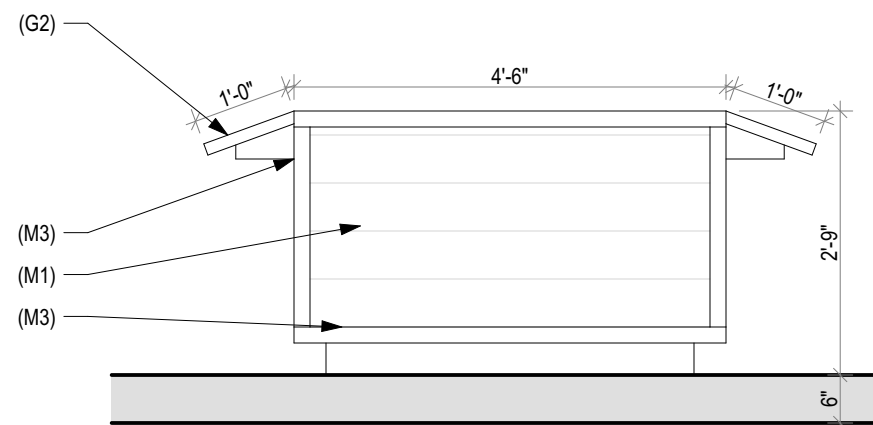
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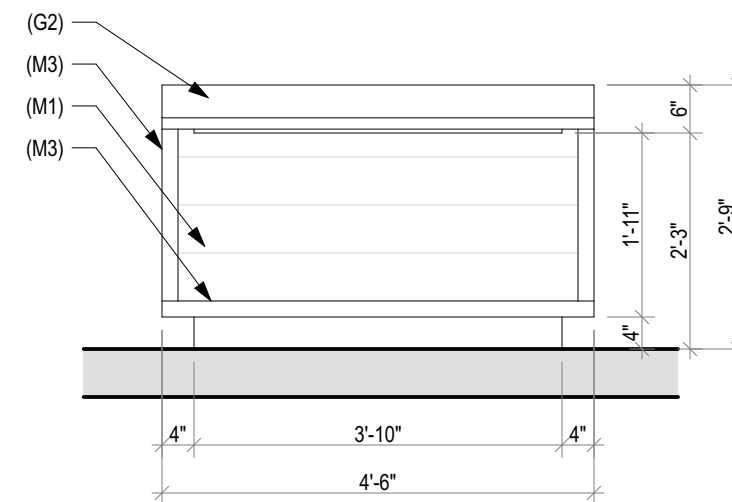
2 3D RELIEF MODEL - 3D VIEW
NOT TO SCALE



1 3D RELIEF MODEL TABLE - PLAN
SCALE: 1/2" = 1'-0"
0 1' 2' 4'



3 3D RELIEF MODEL TABLE - ELEVATION
SCALE: 1/2" = 1'-0"
0 1' 2' 4'

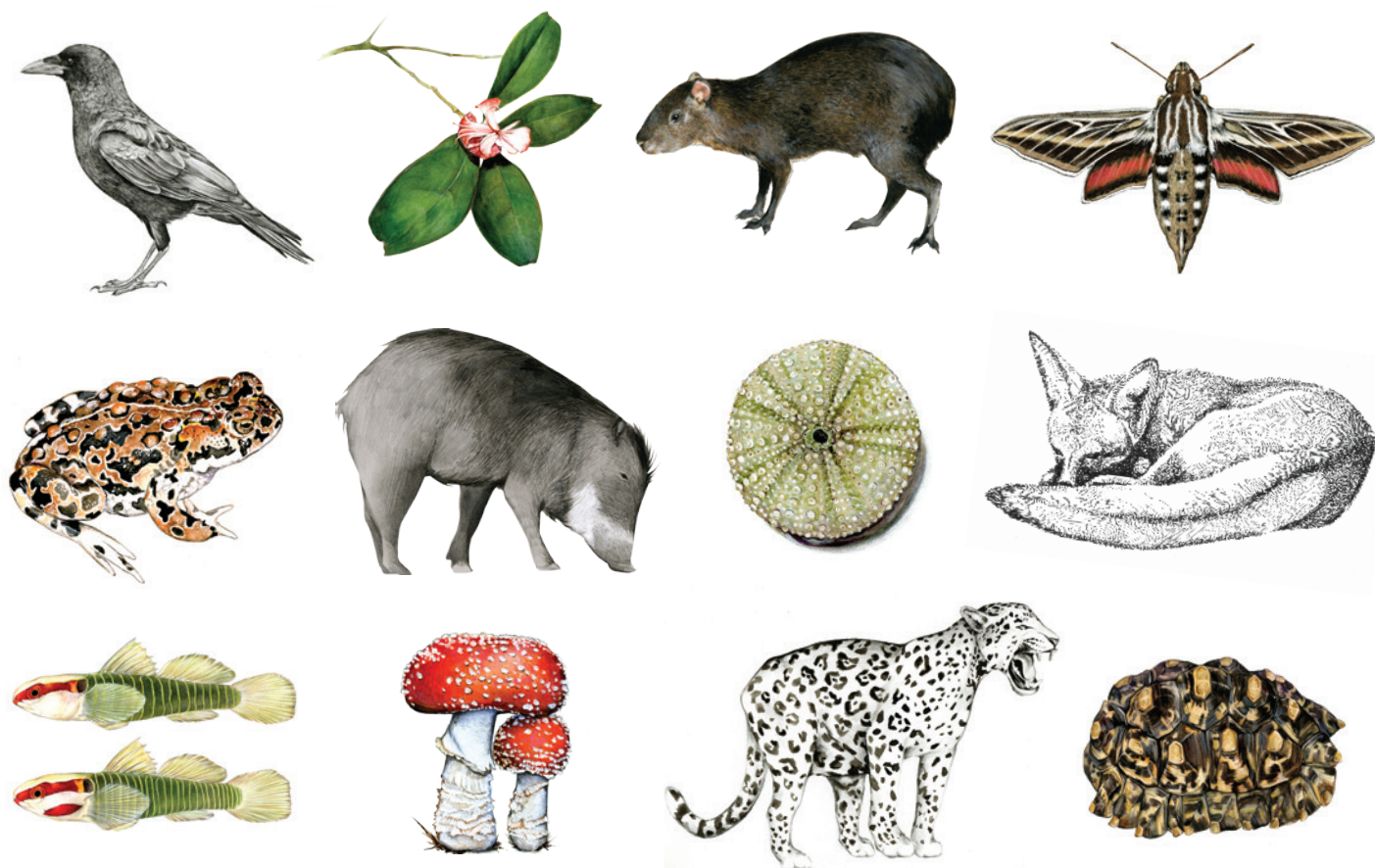


4 3D RELIEF MODEL TABLE - ELEVATION
SCALE: 1/2" = 1'-0"
0 1' 2' 4'

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INK DWELL

Art, Wonder, and the Natural World





Edits to this round include:

- Forested area expanded to encompass the marbled murrelet porthole
- Pond moved closer to the to garter snake porthole
- Native bunch grass species (purple needlegrass) added in foreground
- Red-shouldered hawk included with more detail on plumage
- Fence lizard: reduced dewlap and coloration, reduced size
- Western gray squirrel and flicker added to oak
- Forested mountain placement and peak adjusted
- Mother and baby quail moved to base of oak, mushroom moved near fallen branch/manzanita
- Leaves on rock made smaller
- Pelicans made smaller, placed over baylands
- Transitional plant community added to baylands

CARING FOR COASTAL GRASSLANDS

Rich in native plants and wildlife, California's coastal grasslands evolved over millennia with herds of grazing wildlife and periodic fires that preserved the habitat's open productive qualities.

Today, we have few other tools to protect this important habitat from encroaching shrubs and trees. Carefully managed conservation grazing is one way we work to enhance the unique community of grasses and wildflowers, birds, badgers and other grassland-dependent animals benefit.

On the San Mateo County Coast, Midpen's mission includes protecting agricultural land, preserving rural character and encouraging viable agricultural land use.



One View Many Lands

From coastal terraces, across forested ridgelines, down to briny baylands, this mural captures the essence of what Midpen protects for all of us.

Near the Coast, we restore grasslands, forests and watersheds. Wildlife — including rare and endangered species — live here among working ranchlands.


Along the crest of the Santa Cruz Mountains, we protect and care for special habitats, like redwood forests. In the foothills surrounding urban areas, our open spaces provide homes for plants and animals and nearby nature for people to explore and enjoy.

Along the shore of the San Francisco Bay, we preserve salt marsh wetlands. In turn, they protect us by storing carbon and providing natural flood protection.

RESTORING OUR WOODS, WATERSHEDS & FORESTS

Life-rich habitats define our region. Frog-drenched forests with towering redwoods. Tumbling streams with steelhead trout and salamanders. Oak woodlands with California quail, lupine and poppies, and chaparral with fire-adapted manzanita and sticky monkey flower.

Our projects are as varied as the landscape: improving forest health for wildlife and to make our region more resilient to fire and climate change. Restoring ponds and meads for frogs, fish and greater bluebirds. Protecting wetlands corridors to allow wide-ranging wildlife room to roam.



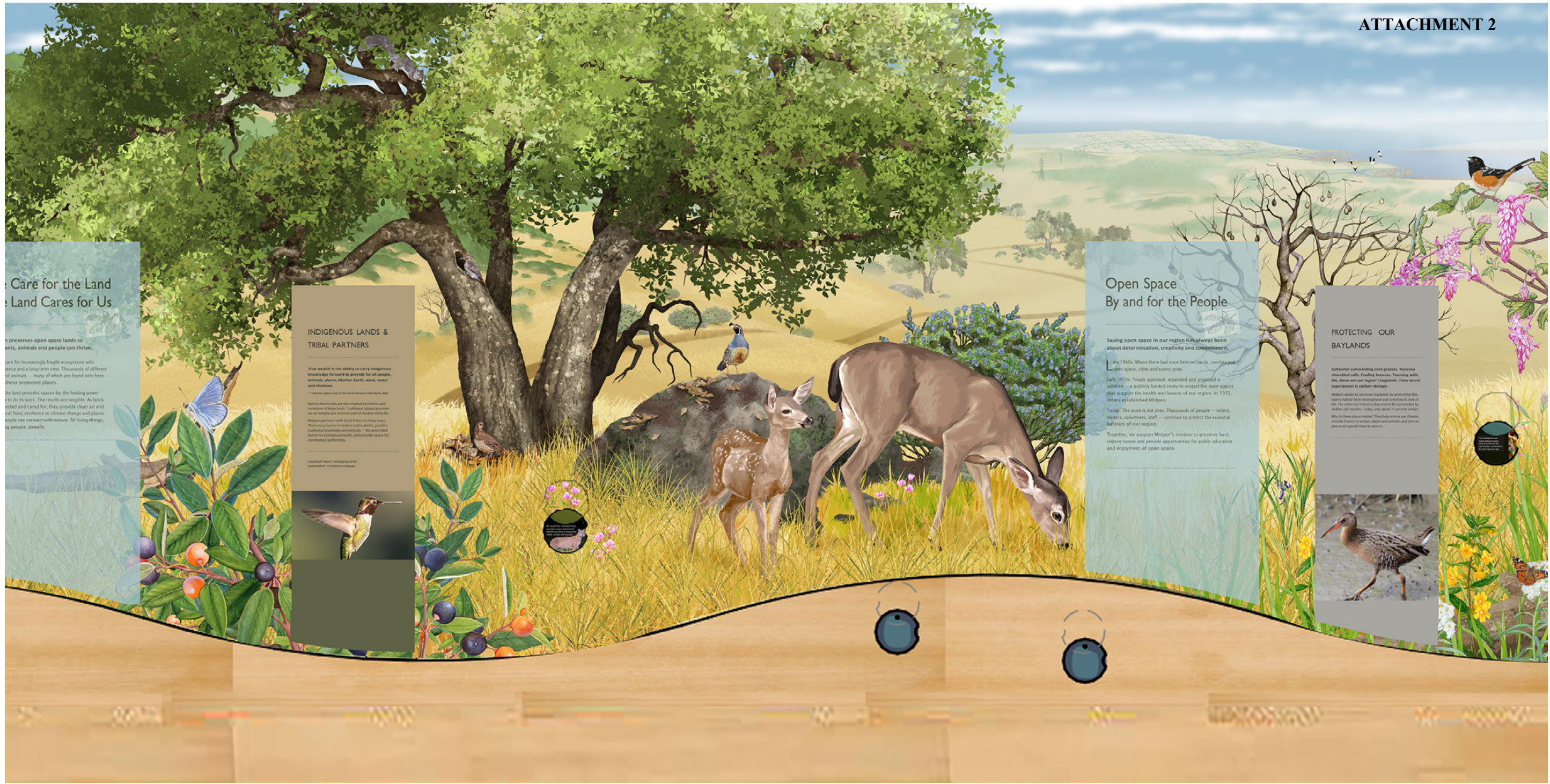
We Care for the Land The Land Cares for Us

Midpen preserves open space lands so that plants, animals and people can thrive.

We care for increasingly fragile ecosystems with science and a long-term view. Thousands of different plants and animals — many of which are found only here — rely on these protected places.

In turn, the land provides spaces for the healing power of nature to do its work. The results are tangible. As lands are protected and cared for, they provide clean air and water, local food, resilience to climate change and places where people can connect with nature. All living things, including people, benefit.





Care for the Land The Land Cares for Us

Preserving open space lands so plants, animals and people can thrive.

Care for increasingly fragile ecosystems with science and a long-term view. Thousands of different plants and animals — many of which are found only here — thrive in these protected places.

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INDIGENOUS LANDS & TRIBAL PARTNERS

True wealth is the ability to carry indigenous knowledge forward to provide for all people, animals, plants, Mother Earth, wind, water and children.

Native Americans are the original residents and caretakers of these lands. Traditional cultural practices are an integral and honored part of modern tribal life.

Midpen partners with local tribes in many ways. There are projects to restore native plants, practice traditional knowledge and methods — like prescribed burns for ecological health, and provide space for ceremonial gatherings.

"Youthful" means "holding place of the future" in the Mission language.



Open Space By and for the People

Saving open space in our region has always been about determination, creativity and commitment.

By the 1960s, where there had once been orchards, ranches and open space, cities and towns grew.

Early 1970s: People organized, organized and proposed a solution — a publicly funded entity to protect the open spaces that support the health and beauty of our region. In 1972, voters established Midpen.

Today, the work is not over. Thousands of people — voters, visitors, volunteers, staff — continue to protect the essential habitats of our region.

Together, we support Midpen's mission to preserve land, restore nature and provide opportunities for public education and enjoyment of open space.

PROTECTING OUR BAYLANDS

Saltwater surrounding cord grasses, Russian shorebird calls. Cooing herons. Teeming with life, these are our region's baylands. Their secret superpower is carbon storage.

Midpen works to preserve baylands by protecting this water habitat from development and reducing its web of life. The entire San Francisco Bay used to be surrounded by shallow salt marshes. Today, only about 15 percent remain.

Why do these places matter? They help restore our climate, provide homes for various plants and animals and give us places to spend time in nature.













Thank You!

INK  DWELL

SQUARE SIGNS PORTFOLIO













Mirman School Mural



Discovery Cube Children's Museum